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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/524,955	02/03/2006	Bruce Towe	05-1027-US	1066
20306	7590	06/05/2009	EXAMINER	
MCDONNELL BOEHNEN HULBERT & BERGHOFF LLP			MANUEL, GEORGE C	
300 S. WACKER DRIVE			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
32ND FLOOR			3762	
CHICAGO, IL 60606				
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06/05/2009		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/524,955	Applicant(s) TOWE ET AL.
	Examiner George Manuel	Art Unit 3762

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED. (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 March 2009.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-4, 8, 19-21 and 23-38 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 1-4, 8, 19, 21 and 23-38 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 20 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/06)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shah et al (US 6,562,033).

Shah et al disclose an intradiscal lesioning device for percutaneous treatment of a patient's intervertebral disc that has a pathological condition that causes discogenic pain.

An elongate introducer having a longitudinal hollow bore is surgically inserted from the patient's skin to extend through the annulus fibrosus thereby providing external surgical access to the nucleus pulposus through the introducer bore. An elongate probe slides through and flexibly conforms to the bore when longitudinally inserted through the bore of the introducer. The distal portion of the probe is capable of conforming to the bore in a longitudinally slidably confined configuration and being deployed into a

predetermined configuration when released within the nucleus pulposus in which the distal portion forms at least one loop of a dimension able to remain within the nucleus pulposus without contacting the inner wall. The distal portion houses lesioning devices for emitting energy in the disc when the distal portion is in the deployed configuration. Shah et al disclose suitable energy sources include a radio frequency electric current and an ultrasound emission.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to stimulate neurons with the device to prevent the transmission of pain signals because Shah et al suggest a direct interruption of the nerves by formation of a lesion blocks the transmissions of pain signals.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 4-8, 19, 21 and 23-38 are allowed.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to George Manuel whose telephone number is (571) 272-4952.

/George Manuel/
George Manuel
Primary Examiner
Art Unit: 3762